



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

Johnny Sutton, U.S. Attorney

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TWO FORMER BOOKKEEPERS SENTENCED FOR \$2.4 MILLION LOSS SCHEME

U.S. Attorney Johnny Sutton announced that in San Antonio this morning, Kathy L. Byers and Sherry Gomez, former bookkeepers for Travis Wholesale Florists, were sentenced to 60 months and 37 months in federal prison, respectively, for their roles in a scheme that defrauded the business of \$2.4 million.

In addition to the prison terms, United States District Judge Fred Biery ordered that Byers pay \$2,400,844.10 in restitution and Gomez pay \$430,213.67 in restitution. Judge Biery also ordered that the defendants be placed under supervised release for a period of three years after completing their prison terms.

“Our entire system of commerce is based on trust. Ms. Byers’ and Ms. Gomez’ selfishness and greed caused them to violate the trust that their employer had placed in them,” stated United States Attorney Johnny Sutton. “Thieves deserve prison sentences. Thieves that steal millions from their employer and co-workers over a five-year-time span deserve lengthy prison sentences.”

On May 5, 2005, Byers and Gomez pled guilty to charges of conspiracy and possession of forged securities. Between September 1998 and December 2003, Byers, Gomez and others caused forged checks to be drawn on accounts of Travis Wholesale Florists. During the scheme, Byers negotiated at least 458 forged checks; Gomez, at least 175 forged checks.

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Assistant United States Attorney Tom Moore prosecuted this case on behalf of the Government.

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